



November 19, 2021

Dear National Association of State EMS Officials,

Prehospital patient care documentation is an essential component of all prehospital medical care, EMS system response, and utilization. The current healthcare environment highlights the increasing demand for timely submission of patient care reports to State repositories and the National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS) National EMS database for public health surveillance, responsive resource allocation, the evaluation of innovative payment models, and the creation of novel evidence-based EMS delivery systems.

Current State submission requirements for prehospital patient care reporting may permit submission lags of up to three months. Delays in timely reporting quickly diminish the value of these records for public health surveillance, situational awareness, billing and/or EMS performance/quality improvement initiatives. Many State record submission rules or guidelines are outdated and do not acknowledge rapid electronic record submissions or the fact that EMS systems can accommodate the resubmission of a record to supplement or correct a value in an existing repository record.

To facilitate the increasing need for agile State and national EMS data systems that can respond to the demands of a fluid healthcare environment, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Office of EMS (OEMS) is encouraging States to request that all out-of-hospital patient care reports be submitted to State repositories within 24 hours of completing the patient encounter. Records requiring updates (or corrections) can be accommodated by resubmitting and updating existing records in the State repository.

We recognize that some technical questions may need to be addressed to meet this objective. The NHTSA OEMS and NEMSIS Technical Assistance Center will continue to work with State EMS Data Managers and EMS software developers to implement mechanisms that promote the prompt availability of records in State and national repositories.

Your continued support of timely EMS patient care reporting has proved invaluable in quickly identifying geographic areas of need related to opioid overdose, influenza-like illnesses and allowing for near real-time benchmarking of EMS system performance. Thank you for your support and interest in improving out-of-hospital emergency care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon R. Krohmer, M.D.", written in a cursive style.

Jon R. Krohmer, M.D.
Director, Office of EMS
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration